Refinery Capacity of HPCL

742. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to raise the HPCL refinery capacity at Mumbai and Vizag;

(b) if so, what is the present capacity of these refineries and what is the proposed raise; and

(c) the details of upgradations proposed to be carried out to achieve the objective?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) to (c) The current installed capacity of Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL)'s refinery at Mumbai and Visakhapatnam is 5.5 million metric tonnes per annum (MMTA) and 7.5 MMTPA respectively. Both refineries have undertaken Clean Fuel Projects to meet future auto fuel specifications, wherein refining capacity of Mumbai refinery and Visakhapatnam refinery will be enhanced to 7.9 MMTPA and 8.33 MMTPA respectively by 2005.

Production of Ethanol-Blended Petrol

743. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Ethanol-blended petrol is produced and supplied in India;

(b) if so, the details of its production and distribution network, State-wise including Andhra Pradesh;

(c) whether it would be made available throughout Andhra Pradesh;

(d) if so, by when;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor;

(f) whether Ethanol-blended petrol would help the sugarcane farmers in increasing the support price of Sugarcane with much reduction in the price of a litre of Ethanol-blended petrol when compared to the price of a litre of petrol; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Oil Companies procure ethanol from manufacturers, blend it with petrol at their supply locations and supply it in notified States/UTs which include State of Andhra Pradesh.

(c) to (e) Yes, Sir. All the areas of Andhra Pradesh are expected to be covered with 5% ethanol blended Petrol supplies by 31-12-2003.

(f) and (g) Blending of ethanol with petrol results in increased demand for ethanol from sugar industry. Sugar industry, in turn depends on farmers for procurement of sugarcane. Thus, the farmers are also benefited by this process. But reduction in the price of ethanol blended petrol would depend on the purchase price of ethanol and the import parity price of petrol.

Natural Gas Population Policy

744. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recently Government have released Natural Gas Population Policy;

(b) if so, the salient features of the proposed policy;

(c) whether Government have any plan to set up a regulator for transmission, distribution, storage, etc.; and

(d) in what manner Government would pool the resources to implement this policy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) In September, 2003, the Government have released a Draft Policy for the Development of Gas Pipelines Network, inviting comments from various stakeholders.

(b) The salient features of the proposed Policy are as follows:-

(1) All the natural gas pipelines will be laid in accordance with the authorization granted by the regulator.